

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1375

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to eliminating foster care citizen review boards.

Brief Description: Eliminating foster care citizen review boards.

Sponsors: Representatives Roberts, Appleton, Walsh, Kagi, Lias, Upthegrove and Kenney.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Early Learning & Children's Services: 2/5/09, 2/6/09 [DP].

Floor Activity

Passed House: 2/23/09, 96-0.

Passed Senate: 4/7/09, 45-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Repeals the chapter of law establishing Foster Care Citizen Review Boards.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Roberts, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Goodman and Seaquist.

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120)

Background:

Foster Care Citizen Review Boards (CR Boards) were established as a pilot program to be administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) during the 1989-91 biennium. The sum of \$500,000 was appropriated to implement the pilot. The CR Boards were designed with the intent of creating local volunteer citizen review boards to advise county-based superior court judges on children's dependency cases. The CR Boards were exempted from some of the procedures and standards applicable to administrative and

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judicial hearings and received training in confidentiality requirements and conflict of interest matters.

Historical budget notes indicate CR Boards were implemented in Snohomish, Yakima, and Clallam counties. Additional funding was appropriated in the 1991-93 biennium, but in the 1993-95 biennium, program funding was eliminated from the AOC budget because the cost-effectiveness of the program was in doubt.

After funding was eliminated, only Snohomish County continued to utilize a CR Board in its processing of children's dependency cases. In January 2009, however, Snohomish County eliminated its CR Board, based in part on the county's budget constraints.

Summary of Bill:

The chapter and related session laws establishing local volunteer foster care citizen review boards are repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a governmental efficiency bill. One of the things we should do in state government is to follow-up by taking things off the books when they are no longer implemented.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Roberts, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.